



# STATE SENATOR JEAN LEISING

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## Dear Friends:

Please help me reduce mailing costs by going to my Web site at [www.in.gov/Senator.Leising](http://www.in.gov/Senator.Leising) and signing up for e-newsletters.

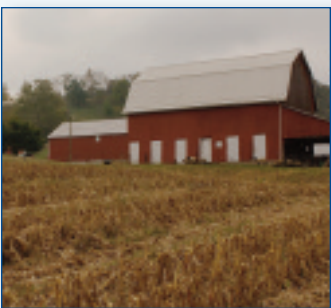
Jean

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## SEN. LEISING: BILLS I SUPPORTED THIS SESSION

✓ **Property Rights:** Aimed at protecting Hoosier homeowners' right to display political signs on their property, lawmakers approved a bill allowing homeowners associations to regulate but no longer ban the display of political signs during election seasons. Senate Enrolled Act 64 prohibits associations from adopting restrictive rules that outright prohibit the display of political signs 30 days before an election. Associations may still adopt and enforce rules restricting the size, number and location of signs.

✓ **Ag Assessments:** Senate Enrolled Act 396, of which I a co-authored, revises the formula used for assessing farmland. The new "Modified Olympic Average" uses an adjusted rolling average that eliminates the highest assessed value over a six year period. The revised formula should provide farmers with more stable agricultural property assessments.



✓ **School Funding Flexibility:** House Enrolled Act 1367 provides schools more flexibility in transferring money from the capital project fund used for construction into operating funds used for instructional purposes. Schools who freeze salaries would be allowed to transfer up to 10 percent. This measure will provide up to \$82 million statewide to help prevent teacher layoffs and preserve instructional programs.



✓ **Costly, Crowded Prisons:** Senate Enrolled Act 415 eases the burden on Indiana's over-crowded correctional facilities and saves tax dollars. Every year of incarceration costs taxpayers at least \$20,000 per inmate, and SEA 415 allows parole boards to consider early discharges for long-term, non violent offenders who have been incarcerated for 21 consecutive years and have completed a four-year college degree or other approved community transition program.



# SEN. JEAN LEISING

SERVING SENATE DISTRICT 42 TAXPAYERS



## BILL TO ATTRACT NEW JOBS BECOMES LAW; UNEMPLOYMENT PREMIUM INCREASES DELAYED

**A**s your state senator, I am very pleased that the General Assembly was able to pass legislation that will be helpful in attracting new business to our state. We also expanded eligibility for our small businesses to secure tax credits. These initiatives include:

- **New Employer Tax Credits** will be offered to businesses relocating or incorporating in Indiana. Qualified businesses must hire 10 or more full-time employees, not including owners.

- **Small Business Tax Credits** will be expanded to make small employers with fewer than 35 workers eligible for Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) credits.

- **Small Business Ombudsman** will be an advocate for small employers with state agencies, helping navigate regulations, streamline paperwork and coordinate due dates. Also, the ombudsman will monitor outdated, ineffective and overly burdensome reporting requests and red tape.



- **H.I.R.E.** (Helping Indiana Re-start Employment) initiative will offer tax incentives to employers who hire and train unemployed and underemployed Hoosiers.

The scheduled increase in new unemployment premiums has been delayed by one year from going into effect in 2010. I had voted against the original bill to increase this tax, estimated at \$400 million, in the 2009 session. By delaying the premium increase that employers are required to pay, I am hopeful that our businesses will be able to retain or add employees.

The counties in Senate District 42 continue to face the challenge of the following unemployment rates: Fayette County is fourth in the state with 13.9 percent, Decatur County ranks 21st at 12.4 percent, and Franklin County ranks 32nd statewide with 11.8 percent. Shelby County comes in 50th at 11.1 percent and Rush County 56th at 10.8 percent, while the Indiana average is 10.6 percent.

Indiana continues to maintain a pro-job climate of lower taxes and limited regulation. State budgets have been cut 20 percent and the salaries of state employees have been frozen.

## ETHICS REFORMS

Legislators proactively passed a comprehensive ethics reform package aimed at improving transparency in government and providing greater accountability over state leaders.

House Enrolled Act 1001 creates a one-year cooling off period before a retired legislator could become a lobbyist. It also requires uniform reporting by all lobbyists. The measure further reduces the amount for reported one-time lobbyist expenses from \$100 to \$50 a day and drops the annual total from \$500 to \$250.

Reforms include expanding registration and reporting requirements for legislative liaisons of state agencies and universities.

The law prohibits statewide officeholders, other than the governor, from appearing or using their name in advertisements funded with state-appropriated dollars, unless approved by a budgetary oversight committee. Also, statewide officeholders and statewide candidates are barred from campaign fundraising during budget-writing sessions.

## GUN RIGHTS

Lawmakers approved two key bills protecting the rights and privacy of Indiana gun owners.

House Enrolled Act 1068 will keep the names, addresses and other identifying information of more than 300,000 Hoosiers with handgun licenses – also referred to as concealed carry permits – confidential, like tax records. The measure would allow colleges, universities and journalists to access race, gender and other non-identifying information for research pur-

poses only.

House Enrolled Act 1065 prohibits most businesses from enacting policies that prevent licensed gun owners from keeping legal firearms in their locked vehicles. However, workers would have to follow strict guidelines. Employees must store their firearms out of sight in consoles, glove boxes or trunks of locked vehicles. Exceptions to the measure include school properties, child care facilities and critical infrastructure like power plants.